THE SCREEN THIEF

OVERVIEW

So What Software's SCREEN THIEF lets you 'capture' and save to disk any Super
Hi-Res screen image that you see on your IIgs' monitor. It doesn't matter how
the image got on the screen -- if it's Super Hi-Res and you can see it, the
SCREEN THIEF will snag it. The only caution you have to exercise is to be sure
not to let any other Super Hi-Res image show up on your monitor before you're
ready, because the SCREEN THIEF gets the image that's in the video memory in
Bank $E1. The SCREEN THIEF instructions will explain all this in some detail.

As a bonus, the SCREEN THIEF disk also has a Slide Show program and a handy
utility for configuring your own slide shows. At last, a way to see all those
graphic screens you've been doing with IIgs paint programs!

USING THE SCREEN THIEF

When the IIgs shows a Super Hi-Res image on the monitor screen, the pattern of
data bytes that creates the image is stored (temporarily) in Memory Bank $E1, one
of the banks provided by the built-in memory. As soon as the Super Hi-Res image
changes to another Super Hi-Res image, the byte pattern changes to that of the
new image. However, other image types, such as a text screen or a graphic image
created by the 'lower resolution' routines available from Applesoft BASIC (eg,
the HGR commands), don't disrupt the byte pattern in Bank $E1. The SCREEN THIEF
exploits this situation by going immediately to Bank $E1, 'grabbing' the byte
pattern there, and saving it to disk as a normal, 65-block graphic image file.
This kind of image file can be loaded and used by all the IIgs paint programs.
So, the SCREEN THIEF lets you capture whatever Super Hi-Res image you see on the
monitor screen, no matter how it got there--you can save screens created 'on the
fly' by any IIgs program, as demonstrated by the Slide Show program on the
SCREEN THIEF disk.

To be sure that the Super Hi-Res image on the screen is still available in Mem-
ory Bank $E1 when you're ready to capture it, you need to put the SCREEN THIEF
disk in the drive that boots when you do a 'Control - Reset'. Booting the
SCREEN THIEF disk will get you into the capture mode without disturbing the
Super Hi-Res image, as you will see when the image is previewed. Then, all you
do is follow the screen prompts, entering the information called for, and the
screen image will be saved to disk.

As an example, assume that your IIgs is set to boot from Slot 5, Drive 1, and that Drive 1 is a 'physical' drive (ie, not a purely electronic drive, such as a RAM or ROM drive). At some point, you see a Super Hi-Res image on the screen that you want to save to disk, so you make sure that the SCREEN THIEF disk is in the 'Slot 5, Drive 1' drive, press the Open Apple, Control, and Reset keys (the Reset key is the one at the top of the keyboard, just to the right of the colored apple symbol), and release them. The SCREEN THIEF disk then boots, and you're off and running.

If your 'boot' drive isn't one you can put the SCREEN THIEF in, you can get around that situation by going into the Control Panel and resetting the Boot Drive to the drive you want to use with the SCREEN THIEF. This is the way to go if you normally leave the Boot Drive setting at 'Scan', and you have a disk in a 5-1/2" drive connected to Slot 6--if you forget, do a 'Control - Reset', and get going with a disk that displays another Super Hi-Res image, you're sunk! (If you use a hard drive, follow the same general procedure.) By the way, don't forget to reset the Boot Drive setting, if you change it.

That's really all you have to know to use the SCREEN THIEF--we hope you enjoy it. If you'd care to see a few screens that we captured 'on the fly', select Option 3 and run the on-disk slide show.

RUNNING THE SLIDE SHOW

We put a slide show program on the SCREEN THIEF disk to give you an idea of some of the images that can be saved to disk that normally are seen only temporarily while running an application. When you select the Slide Show option, the screens are loaded and the Slide Show begins automatically, and there are keyboard controls that let you pause and continue the show, reverse direction, change speed, and show screens one at a time. Just press "C" on your keyboard to see the details. And oh, yes...if you press the "*" key on the keypad while the show is running, it will go back to the beginning.

THE 'USER' SLIDE SHOW AND THE 'CONFIG' OPTION

There's another slide show program on the SCREEN THIEF disk that's intended for you to use for your own slide shows--it's designed to handle up to 16 different images. A 'Config' option is available from the SCREEN THIEF's Main Menu screen that takes you step-by-step through naming the graphic image files you want to use and the border color you want for each one as it's displayed. The USER.SLIDE.SHOW program has the same screen controls as the SCREEN THIEF's slide show, too. You run this program by typing "RUN USER.SS.START" at the IIgs' BASIC prompt (the ']').

When you're selecting the graphic images to be shown during your own slide show, make sure they're in conventional 65-block format, not a 'compacted' format used by some paint program -- the various IIgs paint programs use slightly different compacting routines, and the USER.SLIDE.SHOW isn't smart enough to figure them all out. All the IIgs paint programs we've seen to date can save images in the 65-block, un-compacted format, and of course you can always use the SCREEN THIEF to capture and save an image in the right format, too.

By the way, since you'll undoubtedly want to create a slide show on a disk other than the SCREEN THIEF disk, you need to know what files to have. Make sure your slide show disk has ProDOS (ProDOS 8, of course), BASIC.SYSTEM, and the files SWS.BIN.1, SWS.BIN.2, USER.SS.START, USER.SLIDE.SHOW, and SS.VARS. When you use the 'Config' option on the SCREEN THIEF disk, you create the SS.VARS file--this file will have the number of images you want for your show, their names, the border colors, and the name of your slide show disk. So, you can't omit it.

=> IMPORTANT : Be sure to rename the USER.SS.START file as 'STARTUP' on your new slide show disk!

PITFALLS, GOTCHAs, AND OTHER STUFF

What follows is an assortment of things you ought to know and think about as you're using the SCREEN THIEF. The list by no means covers all possibilities, so we invite you to examine the programs on the SCREEN.THIEF disk, read up a little on Applesoft BASIC programming (remember, Apple included a brief Apple-soft tutorial manual in the box with your IIgs), and experiment.

1. The SCREEN.THIEF and CONFIG programs do their best to alert you to problems such as trying to save a file with a name that's already in use or trying to use a disk name that can't be found. But do keep in mind that there are ways to confuse the routines, and if you do, you may get a program 'crash'. Should this happen, just do a 'Control - Reset' and re-run the program you're using at the time. This is one of the real beauties of using ProDOS 8 and Applesoft BASIC: you can almost always recover from a problem by just pressing a couple of keys. (Too bad the same isn't true of ProDOS 16 and the GSOS.)

2. Don't be tempted to get a Super Hi-Res image on the screen and boot the SCREEN THIEF by turning your IIgs off, then on. Sure, that'll boot the SCREEN THIEF all right, but it'll also wipe out the image you're trying to capture!

3. The SCREEN THIEF is one of several items in So What Software's 'Plain Brown Wrapper' series; others include the MENU MAKER (for making custom, pull-down menus to run your programs) and the ICONIX demo disk (which shows off much of the graphics power of our program ICONIX for the Apple IIgs). Ask for more info.

4. Speaking of ICONIX, the SLIDE.SHOW program uses a few of the many Applesoft BASIC commands that ICONIX provides--there's much, much more. ICONIX, SONIX, and DISC COMMANDER are our formal Apple IIgs programs (ie, with extensive fea-tures and full documentation...and vastly superior to 'plain brown wrapper' software such as The SCREEN THIEF). They give the IIgs owner full control of his/her machine's outstanding graphics, sound, and file handling power. Take a look at the color info sheet enclosed for details on these three programs.

5. We're always interested in your comments and suggestions. Feel free to write us at 10221 Slater Ave., Suite 103, Fountain Valley, CA 92708.